Universalisation of PDS

1729. SHRI SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI MOINUL HASSAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to provide essential commodities to the APL people through Public Distribution System;

(b) whether APL people can afford food expenses in the midst of soaring rise in prices of food articles; and

(c) if not, by when Government is going to implement universalisation of PDS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), focused on the poor is operated under joint responsibility of Central and the State/UT Governments.

Based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1st March, 2000, number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) [(including Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)] families accepted for allocations of foodgrains under TPDS is 6.52 crore out of total 18.04 crore families. However, as reported by end of October, 2009, State/UT Governments have issued 10.96 crore BPL ration cards (which include 2.43 AAY cards) and 13.27 crore APL ration cards.

At present, under the TPDS, allocations of foodgrains to Above Poverty Line (APL) families are made between 10 and 35 kg per family per month depending upon their availability in central pool. During 2009-10, total allocations of rice and wheat for APL category are of 19.02 million tons. These allocations are made at subsidized rates. The Central Issue Prices (CIPs) of foodgrains for APL category are as follows:

(Rs. per kg.)

Wheat	Rice Gr.A	Coarse Grains
6.10	8.30	4.50

At present, under the TPDS, the level of subsidy is 59.5% and 56.2% on wheat and rice respectively allocated to States and UTs for the APL category. These subsidized issue prices for the APL category have been retained at these levels since July 2002 and are thus affordable.

There is no proposal before Government to make Targeted Public Distribution System universal in coverage.